



John Muir Correspondence (PDFs)

---

1913-05-28

**Letter from John Muir to [Francis Fisher] Browne, 1913 May 28.**

John Muir

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarlycommons.pacific.edu/muir-correspondence>

---

**Recommended Citation**

Muir, John, "Letter from John Muir to [Francis Fisher] Browne, 1913 May 28." (1913). *John Muir Correspondence (PDFs)*. 4003.

<https://scholarlycommons.pacific.edu/muir-correspondence/4003>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by Scholarly Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in John Muir Correspondence (PDFs) by an authorized administrator of Scholarly Commons. For more information, please contact [mgibney@pacific.edu](mailto:mgibney@pacific.edu).

*Filed*  
Martinez, Cal. May 28, 1913-

Dear Mr Browne:

I sent You by registered  
mail Yesterday a few pages of  
notes hurriedly written on my  
friendship with your beloved  
father. Make any use  
of them You wish, correct  
mistakes I may have made  
& blot out anything You  
think had better be left  
out.

Sincerely Yours  
John Muir

Newberry Library  
For study only  
unauthorized reproduction forbidden



## Browne the Beloved

Francis Fisher Browne, or Browne the Beloved as I call him, was one of the very finest rarest men I ever knew. During the last five or six years of his life when I came to know him intimately my love and admiration has been constantly growing as the noble strength and beauty of his character came more and more lovingly to view. And I have never ceased to wonder how he was able to do so vast an amount of downright hard work of lasting influence on our literature and at the same time lend a helping hand to hundreds of young aspiring writers, sympathizing with them in their struggles, and cheering them on with heartening advice while fighting an almost every day battle against bad health, heavy enough to utterly disable most men.

He was one of the literary pioneers of the old West who <sup>have</sup> made roaring commercial Chicago a center of literature. His Dial is regarded by far better judges than I am as the most influential of all the American papers devoted to literary affairs. This paper he founded some thirty three years ago & edited it almost up to the day of his death.

Newberry Library  
For study only



He never regained anything like sound health after it was broken by camp fevers in the Civil War. But nothing could crush him or in any appreciable degree abate his wonderful industry. Head and heart triumphed over everything. He had a wonderful memory, knew almost every author, & could quote their finest pieces as if reading from their books. The beauty and manly strength of his character, and his capacity for lifelong sacrifice and devotion are displayed in his writings, but still more tellingly in his conversation when his fine face was glowing with soul radium.

Newberry Library  
For study only  
unauthorized reproduction forbidden

Like every great-hearted poet he was a nature lover and a charming companion on wave-embroidered shores and sunny hills and mountains. And it is with peculiar delight that I recall my walks with him on the Pasadena hills in the spring when everything was rejoicing in newness of life, and in sublime Yosemite

When I took John Burroughs into the valley we had the grand good fortune to find our beloved Browne there. He was suffering from his dreadful sick-headaches and was unable to go to the hotel dinner table, so I managed to get something he wanted from the kitchen, and we



all retired early to our rooms in the Big Tree Cottage and went to bed. Burroughs had a room to himself, while Browne & I occupied a larger one separated from John's only by a thin dry board partition resonant as the walls of a fiddle, which faithfully transmitted every word we spoke or sang. After the headache clouds thinned and lifted a little, all bedroom rules, and even the great cliffs and waterfalls of the valley were forgotten; and we began a glorious revel in Burns' poems, all of which we had by heart, reciting and singing verse about for hours, sadly interfering with John's regular habits as repeated rappings and calls for sleep-silence testified. With lowered voices we then continued our grand revel in muffled stage-whispers and keeping down our merry humor fits as low as possible until far on toward the wee sma' hours about the twal, making a most memorable night of it. Beloved Browne was the only American I ever knew or heard of who had all Burns by heart, and who understood him so well that he was able to enjoy ~~him~~ the immortal poet almost as well as a veritable Scot.

As we grow old we cling all the more fondly to old friends; but death takes them away just when need of them is sorest. Within the last two years two of my Pasadena and Los Angeles friends of the dear old leal sort have vanished never to be seen again in this world of light. And now Beloved Browne has gone and all California seems lonelier than ever.



4  
Surely no man was ever better loved  
and his lovely friendships will abide  
with us until the end.

John Muir

Newberry Library  
For study only  
unauthorized reproduction forbidden